



MINNESOTA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING EXPANSION OF THE BLUE LAKE GENERATING PLANT

EQB Dockets No. 04-74-CON-Xcel & No. 04-75-PPS-Xcel

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Xcel Energy, Inc. has applied to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for a Certificate of Need and to the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) for a Site and Route Permit associated with a proposed expansion of the Blue Lake Generating Plant in Scott County, Minnesota. Xcel proposes to add two, 162-megawatt, simple cycle, natural gas-fired combustion turbine generators at the Blue Lake Generating Plant. As part of this project, Xcel Energy proposes to construct a new segment of double circuit 115/230 kV transmission line, approximately 4000 feet in length, to connect the Blue Lake Substation to an existing 230 kV transmission line that passes south of the Plant site.

A copy of the Certificate of Need Application is available on the EQB webpage.
<http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=5693>

A copy of the Site and Route Permit Application is available on the EQB webpage.
<http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=5694>

On March 11, 2004, the EQB will conduct a public information meeting in the City of Shakopee's public meeting room located at city hall. The meeting will be held at 2:00 pm and at 7:00 pm. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information to the public about the proposed project, to answer questions, and to allow the public an opportunity to suggest alternatives and impacts that should be considered during preparation of the environmental review document.

The EQB is required to prepare a document called an Environmental Report when a certificate of need for a large energy project is applied for. Minn. Rules part 4410.7020. In the Environmental Report the EQB evaluates the human and environmental impacts of a project of the type proposed and of various alternatives to the proposed project. Minn. Rules part 4410.7035. The certificate of need process is the only time when issues of size and type of the facility, voltage of the transmission line, and the no-build alternative are considered.

A project proposer who seeks a certificate of need for a new power plant must also obtain a site permit from the EQB for a site for the project. During the site permitting process, the EQB is required to prepare a document called an Environmental Assessment, analyzing the potential site specific impacts of the project. Minn. Rules chapter 4400. If an applicant has applied to the EQB for a site permit for a specific site for a proposed project while the certificate of need application is pending before the Public Utilities Commission, the EQB may elect to consider the more general impacts of the proposed project with the site specific impacts associated with the proposed location of the power plant. In such event, the EQB prepares the one environmental review document called an Environmental Assessment. Minn. Rules part 4410.7060.

The Chair designated EQB staff members Bill Storm as project manager and Larry Hartman as the public advisor in this matter. Inquiries about this project should be directed to the EQB project manager, Bill Storm (bill.storm@state.mn.us) or Larry Hartman (larry.hartman@state.mn.us) 300 Centennial Bldg., 658 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55155, telephone 651.296.9535, facsimile 651.296.3698 (TTY relay service 800.627.3529).

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